

Fiber: Powerful Foods Full of Fiber

Fiber is an essential nutrient that is filling, satisfying, and crunchy. Fill your plate with foods full of fiber to have a balanced and powerful meal.

Why is fiber so important?

It helps your body in many ways. Fiber will:

- Enhance the sensation of fullness and your satisfaction with a meal.
- Help control your portion sizes.
- Ensure proper digestion, preventing both constipation and diarrhea.
- Keep cholesterol and blood sugar in healthy ranges.
- Effectively lower blood pressure, cholesterol, inflammation and blood sugar levels in the body—which will improve your energy level and mood, and prevent disease.

Why should I eat foods high in fiber?

Foods high in fiber are colorful and tasty; they will enhance the flavor and satisfaction of any meal or snack, plus, protect your health. Fiber works synergistically with antioxidants in food to promote optimal health and maximal enjoyment of food!

How much fiber do you need to eat?

The Recommended Daily Intake for fiber is:

Males 30-38 grams per day Females 20-25 grams per day

What does “insoluble” and “soluble” fiber mean?

There are two types of fiber in the foods that we eat. Insoluble fiber is found on the outside of foods, in the skins, stems and stalks of fruits and vegetables, and in the bran of grains. Soluble fiber is found within foods. It dissolves in water and forms a gooey texture that has important health effects. Both insoluble and soluble have unique benefits.

Benefits of INSOLUBLE FIBER	Benefits of SOLUBLE FIBER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crunchy texture • Bulky • Keeps food moving through your digestive tract, preventing constipation • Reduces the risk for colon cancer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lowers cholesterol levels • Regulates blood sugar • Reduces blood pressure • Limits inflammation • Reduces the risk for heart disease

What are simple ways for me to increase fiber-rich foods into my day?

- ✓ Choose rolled oats instead of instant oatmeal. No worries, you can still cook this type of oatmeal in 5 minutes.
- ✓ Look for precooked steel-cut oatmeal in the freezer section. Or make your own slow cooking oatmeal and freeze to save time in the future.
- ✓ Choose a dry cereal with at least 3 grams of fiber per 100 calories.
- ✓ Look for 100% whole grain or 100% whole wheat breads, crackers, pastas and tortillas.
- ✓ Sprinkle ground flaxseeds onto cereal, yogurt, salads and soups.
- ✓ Try to eat beans or lentils nearly every day.
 - Use hummus as veggie dip or sandwich spread
 - Make lentil soup for dinner and take leftovers for lunch or a snack
 - Add fat free refried beans to your breakfast burrito
 - Mix white beans with whole wheat pasta and your favorite sauce
 - Cook brown rice with lentils
- ✓ Add vegetables and fruit to each meal and snack that you eat.
- ✓ Keep frozen fruit in the freezer and blend with yogurt, milk or 100% fruit juice for a quick smoothie.
- ✓ Have a salad at least once a day.
- ✓ Eat berries often. Fresh and frozen are both excellent options. Include on salads. Snack on berries. Use as a dessert.
- ✓ Try to eat vegetables and fruits from each color category every day: red, orange/yellow, blue/purple, white and green.
- ✓ Eat a intact whole grain every day. Such as, oatmeal, brown rice, quinoa, risotto, corn or popcorn. To save time, prepare a large batch of these grains and refrigerate or freeze to eat later.

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Which foods provide fiber?

Below is a listing of common foods and their fiber content. Use this table to estimate how much fiber you consume and learn which foods are good sources of fiber.

Food, portion size	Fiber, grams	x	# Daily Portions	=	Total Fiber Eaten
Vegetables					
Minestrone soup, 1 c	6.0	x			
Sweet potato or white potato, 1 medium	5.0	x			
Winter squash, ½ c	3.0	x			
Broccoli, cauliflower, ½ c	2.5	x			
Carrots, ½ c	2.5	x			
Greens, kale, mustard collards, cooked, ½ c	2.5	x			
Corn, ½ c	2.0	x			
Asparagus, ½ c	1.5	x			
Bell pepper, ½ c	1.5	x			
Carrots, ½ c	1.5	x			
Tomatoes, ½ c	1.5	x			
Lettuce, 1 c	1.0	x			
Spinach, raw, 1 c	1.0	x			
Zucchini, ½ c	1.0	x			
Cucumber, ½ c	0.5	x			
Fruits					
Raspberries, 1 c	11	x			
Blackberries, 1 c	7.5	x			
Blueberries, strawberries, 1 c	5.0				
Papaya, 1	5.0	x			
Pear, 1	5.0	x			
Peaches, frozen, sliced 1 c	4.5	x			
Apple, 1	3.5	x			
Mango, 1	3.5	x			
Applesauce, 1 c	3.0	x			
Banana, 1	3.0	x			
Orange, 1	3.0	x			
Prunes, 5	3.0	x			
Kiwi, 1	2.5	x			
Apricots, 5 halves	1.5	x			
Prune juice, ½ c	1.5	x			
Grapes, 1 c or 15	1.0	x			
Raisins, ¼ c	1.0	x			
Watermelon, 1 c cubes	1.0	x			
Beans and Lentils					
Bean and ham soup, 1 c	11	x			
Green peas, 1 c	9.0				
Baked beans, ½ c	8.5	x			
Cooked beans, any type, ½ c	~ 8	x			
Hummus, ½ c	7.0	x			
Refried beans, ½ c	6.5	x			
Bean chili, 1 c	6.0	x			
Soybeans (edamame), ½ c	5.0	x			
Lentil soup, 1 c	4.0	x			
Split pea soup, 1 c	4.0	x			

Food, portion size	Fiber, grams	x	# Daily Portions	=	Total Fiber Eaten
Cereals					
Raisin Bran, 1 c	7.0	x			
Shredded Mini Wheat, 1 c	5.0	x			
Total or Wheaties, 1 c	5.0	x			
Oat bran, ½ c	3.0	x			
Cheerios, 1 c	2.0	x			
Honey Bunches of Oats, 1 c	2.0	x			
Rolled oats, ½ c	2.0	x			
Instant oatmeal, ½ c	1.0	x			
Grains					
Tortilla, whole wheat, 1 medium	10	x			
English muffin, whole wheat	4.5	x			
Bulgur, ½ c	4.0	x			
Barley, ½ c	3.0	x			
Bread, whole wheat, 1 slice	3.0	x			
Spaghetti, whole wheat, ½ c	3.0	x			
Quinoa, ½ c	2.5	x			
Buckwheat groats, ½ c	2.0	x			
Brown rice, ½ c	1.5	x			
English muffin	1.5	x			
Wild rice, ½ c	1.5	x			
Bread, white or wheat, 1 slice	1.0	x			
Couscous, ½ c	1.0	x			
Spaghetti, ½ c	1.0	x			
Tortilla, 1 medium	1.0	x			
White rice, ½ c	<.5	x			
Nuts and Seeds					
Flaxseeds, ground, 2 T	4.0	x			
Almonds, 12	2.0	x			
Peanuts, 20	1.5	x			
Pecans, 10 halves	1.5	x			
Sunflower seeds, 2 T	1.5	x			
Peanut butter, 1 T	1.0	x			
Snacks					
Crispbread crackers, 2	5.0	x			
Pretzels, whole wheat, 10 twists	4.5	x			
Kashi TLC Granola Bar, 1	4.0	x			
Triscuits, 6	3.0	x			
Nature Valley Granola Bars, 2	2.0	x			
Pretzels, 10 twists	1.5	x			
Brown rice cake, 2	1.0	x			
Oatmeal raisin cookie, 1	1.0	x			
Popcorn, 1 c	1.0	x			
Quaker Chewy Granola Bar, 1	1.0	x			
Saltines, 4	1.0	x			
Wheat Thins, 15	1.0	x			
Cheese crackers, ½ c	0.5	x			
Chocolate chip cookie, 1	<.5	x			
Graham cracker, 1 rectangle	.0.5	x			

Total fiber eaten = _____ - Fiber goal _____ = _____ Grams of fiber needed to meet goal

Nutrient data from: <http://www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/foodcomp/search/> and www.calorieking.com

C = cup, T = tablespoon